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HOUSE RESOLUTION

2 WHEREAS, The members of the Illinois House of
3 Representatives wish to recognize Kevin Bracken of Chicago, a
4 member of the 2000 United States Greco-Roman wrestling Olympic
5 team, as he retires from his wrestling career; and

6 WHEREAS, Kevin's wrestling career began in the seventh
7 grade on the south side of Chicago; his father, Bill, and his
8 brother, Billy, were major influences on his decision to begin
9 wrestling; in his second year of wrestling, he qualified for
10 the Kids State Tournament; and

11 WHEREAS, He attended St. Laurence High School in Burbank, a
12 school with a strong tradition in wrestling and other sports;
13 in his junior year he won Junior National Championships in
14 Greco-Roman Wrestling; Kevin led the St. Laurence Vikings to
15 their first wrestling State Championship as team captain and
16 most valuable wrestler his senior year; and

17 WHEREAS, Kevin competed for Illinois State University from
18 1991 to 1995, where he broke the school's record for career
19 wins; he was the youngest competitor in the 1992 Olympic Trials
20 and took fourth place; after attending the 1996 Olympics as an
21 alternate, he accepted the position of top assistant coach at
22 Northern Illinois University, where he helped coach two-time
23 All-American wrestler Jeremy Goeden, the school's first
24 All-American in 22 years; and

25 WHEREAS, From 1996 to 2003, Kevin was a member of Team USA,
26 which consists of the top three individuals at each weight
27 class; as a member of this team, he visited 22 countries and
28 wrestled in over 50 international matches; one of his biggest
29 wins was over World Champion Nikolai Monov of Russia in the
30 World Cup; and

1 WHEREAS, Kevin went into the 2000 Olympic Trials as the
2 favorite, and he won matches in the best-of-three series by
3 scores of 4-0 and 7-4 to claim a spot on the U.S. Greco-Roman
4 Olympic team; competing in the Olympic Games was a dream come
5 true for Kevin; he started the tournament with a dominating
6 12-5 win over the 1999 World Silver Medalist; the Olympic Games
7 came to a close with Kevin taking 6th place in Sydney; and

8 WHEREAS, Kevin's first U.S. Open National Championship was
9 in 1997; he placed in the top four in the United States from
10 1991 to 2003, missing one national championship due to
11 appendicitis; he won the 2001, 2002, and 2003 National
12 Championships; and

13 WHEREAS, Kevin's hopes for making the 2004 U.S. Greco-Roman
14 Olympic team ended when he lost at the finals of 2004 Olympic
15 Trials; in accordance with wrestling tradition, he placed his
16 shoes in the center of the the mat following his last match to
17 signify his retirement; therefore, be it

18 RESOLVED, BY THE HOUSE OF REPRESENTATIVES OF THE
19 NINETY-THIRD GENERAL ASSEMBLY OF THE STATE OF ILLINOIS, that we
20 recognize Kevin Bracken on his outstanding wrestling career, we
21 congratulate him for representing the United States in the
22 sport of Greco-Roman wrestling with dedication and courage; and
23 we wish him well in all his future endeavors; and be it further

24 RESOLVED, That a suitable copy of this resolution be
25 presented to Kevin Bracken as a token of our admiration and
26 respect.